

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

Claims 1-14, 38-54, 72, 74, 89-97, 111-113, 118-126, and 129-138 were pending in this application. In this Amendment, Applicant has cancelled claims 1-7, 9-14, 39, 46, 47, 91-95, 112, 113, and 118-126, amended claims 8, 41-43, 45, 48, 49, 51, 53, 72, 74, 89, 90, 96, 97, 111, 130-132, 135, and 138, and added new claims 139-156. Claims 15-37, 55-71, 73, 75-88, 98-110, 114-117, 127, and 128 have been withdrawn from consideration. Accordingly, claims 8, 38, 40-45, 48-54, 72, 74, 89, 90, 96, 97, 111, and 130-156 will be pending herein upon entry of this Amendment.

In the Office Action, claims 129-138 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first and second paragraphs, for lack of enablement and for indefiniteness. Claims 1-6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,332,214 to Tucker, Sr. (“Tucker”). Claims 7, 9-14, 38-46, 47-54, 72, 74, 89-97, 111-113, 118-126, and 129-138 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tucker in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,102,613 to Dill (“Dill”).

Applicant’s representative wishes to thank Examiners Sewell and Duong for the courtesies extended during the personal interview conducted June 10, 2003. The substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

Regarding the §112 rejections, as suggested by the Examiners in the interview, Applicant has amended the specification to more clearly describe the first and second magnet recited in

claims 129-131 and 133-135. No new matter has been added. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that the description of the subject matter in the specification is enabling and that the recitation of the first and second magnet in claims 129-131 and 133-135 is definite. Applicant has also amended claim 132 to remove the recitation of "Surlyn" in favor of the term, "thermoplastic."

In response to the §102 and §103 rejections, Applicant has amended the claims to more clearly recite features distinguishable over the applied references, as discussed in the interview of June 10, 2003. To the extent that these rejections might still be applied to claims presently pending in this application, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as described below.

Applicant has amended claims 8, 90, 111, 137, and 138 and added new claims 141, 144, and 147 to recite an indentation in the striking surface attachment and/or the putter head, for gripping and separating the striking surface attachment from the putter head. Applicant has also added new claims 139, 140, 142, 143, 145, and 146 to more clearly recite a member (*e.g.*, a tab, ridge, or flange) provided on the striking surface attachment for gripping and separating the striking surface attachment from the putter head. Support for these amendments can be found, for example, in the specification at page 21, lines 13-15 and at page 22, line 21 to page 23, line 2, and in Figures 1A and 1D.

Neither Tucker nor Dill teach or suggest these features. Indeed, the need for these features in the present invention stems from the use of a magnetic bond or interference fit between the striking surface attachment and the putter head. Tucker and Dill fail to recognize this need. In Tucker, the striking surface attachment and putter head are joined by fasteners.

(*See, e.g.*, column 2, lines 61-63). When these fasteners are removed, the striking surface attachment is not positively secured to the putter head and can be removed without the need for excessive gripping or pulling on the striking surface attachment. With respect to Dill, although Dill teaches that a face plate or strike plate of a club can be attached by magnets, Dill fails to teach or suggest any structure for assisting a user in removing the magnetically-attached face plate or strike plate. Essentially, Tucker and Dill do not address these indentation and grippable member features of the present invention because Tucker and Dill do not focus on quick, toolless replacement of the striking surface attachment, as is an aspect of the present invention.

Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 8, 90, 111, 137, 138, 139, 141, and 147 are patentable over the applied references, as well as their corresponding dependent claims 48-54, 72, 74, 89, 142-144, 96, 97, 140, 144, 145, and 146.

As another feature distinguishable over the applied references, Applicant has amended claim 131 to more clearly recite the molded shell of the putter head as securing the striking surface attachment to the putter head. Support for this amendment can be found, for example, in the specification at page 20, line 18 to page 21, line 2 and at page 43, lines 9-22. As discussed in the interview, neither Tucker nor Dill teach or suggest this feature. Along these lines, Applicant has also amended claim 135 and added new claims 148, 149, 152, and 153 to recite further variations of this embodiment, for example, in which the striking surface attachment has a thermoplastic surface that is compressed within the cavity of the putter head face to secure the striking surface attachment to the putter head.

As a further distinguishable feature, Applicant has also added claims 150, 151, 154, and 155 to recite magnets applied to the striking surface attachment and/or putter head face to further secure the striking surface attachment. In particular, claims 151 and 155 recite a golf putter head having a metal core and a thermoplastic shell molded around the metal core, with a portion of the metal core exposed to which a magnet is attached. Neither Tucker nor Dill teach or suggest these structural features. For these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 131, 148, and 152 are patentable over the applied references, as well as their corresponding dependent claims 130, 132-138, 149-151, and 153-155.

Finally, as discussed in the interview, the applied references do not teach or suggest a method for separating a striking surface attachment from a putter head using a golf tee, as is recited in original claim 40. Support for this recitation can be found, for example, in the specification at page 21, line 7 and in Figures 1A and 1B. Applicant has left claim 38 pending without amendment to serve as the base claim of unamended claim 40, which includes limitations distinguishable over the applied references. Applicant has also amended claims 41-45 to depend from claim 40 and has added claim 156 as a further embodiment of this feature. Support for new claim 156 can also be found, for example, in the specification at page 21, line 7 and in Figures 1A and 1B.

The need for this method of separating the striking surface attachment from the putter head, again, stems from the use of a magnetic bond or interference fit between the striking surface attachment and the putter head. The golf tee is used to break this bond. In contrast, in Tucker, when the fasteners are removed, the striking surface attachment is easily separated from

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the putter head without the need for any appreciable force. Likewise, although Dill teaches a magnetic bond, Dill fails to teach or suggest methods for separating the magnetically-attached components. In light of this distinction, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 40-45 and 156 are distinguishable over the applied references.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the pending claims in this case are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

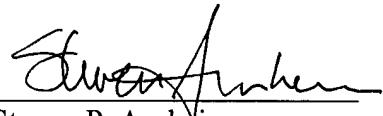
SHAW PITTMAN LLP
1650 Tysons Boulevard
McLean, VA 22102
Tel: 703/770-7900

Date: June 11, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

RICHARD B.C. TUCKER, SR.

By:


Steven P. Arnheim
Registration No. 43,475

AB/SPA/mvj